

*The World turn'd upside down.*

Being the SUBSTANCE of a

# S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN THE

THURSDAY MARKET,

IN THE

CITY of YORK,

MAY 6, 1781.

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By T. TAYLOR.

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*Is all well? Wherefore came this mad Fellow?*

2 KINGS ix. 11.

*I am not mad;—but speak forth the words of  
truth and soberness.*

ACTS xxvi. 6.

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To the PUBLIC.

*WHEN I preached the ensuing plain Sermon, I had not the least thought of its ever being made public; but a circumstance or two which happened, together with the singularity of the Text, made some think it adviseable to send it out into the world.——I was the more easily induced to comply with the request of my Friends, that the inhabitants of this City may see, and judge, what it is we are preaching in their streets; and whether there is not need to cry aloud and spare not, and to shew Sinners the error of their ways.*

*I shall not trouble the Reader by making any apologies concerning the stile and manner of it. My ultimate apology is, that it is the Truth, and wants enforcing every where.*

T. T.



## S E R M O N, &amp;c.

ACTS xvii. 6.

*These that have turned the world upside down,  
are come hither also.*

**T**HE preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness, and every thing appertaining to the same is generally treated with great contempt. *For the natural man, the unchanged man, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned\**. Hence it is that all such have been, and still are, enemies to the Cross of Christ; *for the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the Law of God†*. This enmity has shewn itself in various forms; sometimes in rage and violence; sometimes by ridicule and scorn; sometimes by secret and sly insinuations, trying to make such as profess Religion suspected of evil designs.

All these methods were practised against our Saviour, and the same we find verified against his followers.—However, God has frequently so over-ruled things for good, that even the wrath of man has praised him; so that

\* 1. Cor. ii. 14.

† Rom. viii. 7.

that the very terms of reproach have turned out solid truths.—For instance, the Pharisees, in contempt, called our Saviour *a friend of publicans and sinners*.—Again they said, *this man receiveth sinners*, which are now precious truths: So those singular words which I have just now read over, were spoken, partly by way of accusation against the servants of God, and partly by way of contempt, *These*, said they, *which have turned the world upside down are come hither also*. Now they really spoke a great truth, tho' in much ignorance: for this was the very design of the gospel, to turn the world upside down. And is it not the very design of the gospel, even now, to turn the world upside down? Does it not want such a turning? Do we not see the lives and practices of men want such a turning? And as we have been honoured with the same reflection, with those holy men of old, we will own the charge, only we must beg leave to explain ourselves, and tell you our real meaning.—And suffer me to entreat your patience, and beg that none will make any disturbance, but that such as are disposed to hear may hear peaceably. That the Text may be rendered somewhat useful, I shall

I. Consider that the design of the Gospel is to *turn the world upside down*.

II. Shew you why we are come hither.

Lastly, Make some application.

I.



I. I am to consider that the design of the Gospel is *to turn the world upside down.*

It is a great truth, asserted in the Bible, and confirmed by woful experience, that *darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people that dwell therein\**: Now, the design of the Gospel is *to open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God†*. By darkness we are to understand ignorance; and, as the Apostle says, *the times of ignorance God winked at‡*. But what kind of ignorance does he mean? He could not mean natural things, for it was a very enlightened age (in that respect) in which he lived; learning of all kinds was in its highest perfection, and learned men met with very great encouragement, especially in the time of Augustus, who, being himself a man of letters, gave great encouragement to all who excelled in the same; and yet that time is by the Apostles reputed a Season of ignorance. But what were they ignorant of? They were ignorant of themselves; they did not know *that they were poor, and wretched, and miserable; and blind, and naked§*. They were ignorant of the *only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent||*. They were ignorant of the nature of true religion; they knew nothing of the spiritual worship which that God, who is a spirit, requires from all who worship him¶¶. And do we not see the same ignorance prevailing even now? Nay,

A 3 does

\* Isaiah lx. 7.

† Acts. xxvi. 18.

‡ Acts xvii. 30.

§ Rev. iii. 18.

|| John xvii. 3.

¶¶ John iv. 24.

does it not shamefully prevail in this ancient City? Now then, there is need of the same turning upside down in this day, and in this City, that was necessary in the apostolical ages.—We have need that God, *who commanded light to shine out of darkness, may shine into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* \*.

2. The design of the Gospel is to turn men from death to life. As soon as man sinned he died; that is, his soul died a spiritual death, and in the same wretched state all his unhappy posterity come into the world, and are no more capable, of ourselves, to perform any thing acceptable to God, than dead bodies are of performing the functions of living men. To this purpose the Apostle speaks, *But GOD, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we WERE DEAD IN SINS, hath quickened us together with Christ* †. Now, then, the design of the Gospel is to call men from this spiritual death, that they may be quickened by grace, and wholly made alive to God; *that they may eat the flesh of Jesus and drink his blood, that eternal life may be in them* ‡. The believer is pass'd from death unto life; the unbeliever shall not see life, for the wrath of God abideth on him. How can we run our christian race without life? or how can we fight the good fight of Faith if we have no life?

3. The

\* 2 Cor. iv. 6.

† Eph. ii. 6, 7.

‡ John vi. 54, 55.

3. The design of the Gospel is to turn men from rebellion to obedience — That every soul of man, in his unrenewed state, is in a state of disobedience, I prove from your own confession, I mean such as own the authority of our church. Suffer me to remind you what you then say, “ We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep ; we have done those things we ought not ; and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done.” But I have even greater authority than this, even God’s word, *And you, says the apostle, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through Christ* †. And should either of these witnesses be disputed, I mean the Church of England and the Scriptures, doth not daily experience prove the point ? Is not every curser and swearer a rebel against the King of Heaven ? Is not every liar and drunkard, sabbath-breaker or unclean person in the same situation ? For what is rebellion, but breaking the laws of the land ? And what is rebellion against God, if breaking his laws be not, and flying in the face of his command ? but let the Gospel take place and the man’s rebellion is at an end ; he fears God, he honours the King and all that are in authority. He will attend unto the fifth command, and becomes a better man. The receiving the Gospel will make men better husbands, better

† Col. i. 21, 22.

ter subjects, and better neighbours, so that they will labour to fill up those relative stations in life to the praise and glory of God. This will do that which coercive laws and corporal punishments will not do; it will make them act from principle, and fixes that heavenly rule in their breasts, *whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, that do ye also.* Without this a name or party signifies very little; for the greater his privileges are, the greater is his condemnation; for *he that knoweth his master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

4. The design of the Gospel is to turn men from sin to holiness. I say sin, not barely such as may bring pain or shame upon us from our fellow mortals, but whatever has a tendency to defile the soul.—The true convert is not satisfied with making the outside of the cup clean; but his prayer is, to be “delivered from all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy, and from all uncharitableness”; yea, “that the thoughts of his heart may be cleansed by the inspiration of God's holy spirit, that he may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.” St. Paul says, *Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof* †. And the Lord says, *Be ye holy, for I am holy* ‡. Nothing which defiles can enter into the New Jerusalem; for *without holiness no man can see the Lord.*

† Rom. vi. 12.    ‡ 1 Pet. i. 16.



*Lord* \*. And depend upon it that same holy Lord who expelled sinning angels out of Heaven, will never suffer sinning worms to come there. Besides, our Saviour gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works †; for none but the pure in heart can see God. Now, let the blessed Gospel of God our Saviour take place, and it will answer the desired end; and therefore we ought not to be ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes ‡.

5. The design of the Gospel is to turn men from misery to happiness.—Happiness is the desire of every human being. It is for this that all creation is, as it were, groaning and travelling in birth; and men have fancied it to be in several things in which it is not. Hence one is seeking it in money, and pants after the dull shadow with all his might; rises early, and takes rest late; is ever restless, and is just like the idiot who ran after the rainbow; for tho' he run ever so fast, still the rainbow left him behind: So it is with the man who is aiming to satisfy his empty soul with money.—The very same may be said of that honour which one poor worm can receive from another: The same of dress, diversions, company, or any other earthly delight. All these are seeking the living among the dead. Every created thing  
says

\* Mat. v. 8.

† Tit. ii. 14.

‡ Rom. i. 16.

says "happiness is not in me." What then is to make that spirit, which is the breath of the Almighty, happy? Verily, nothing but the Almighty himself, and the blessed Gospel points the wanderer directly to him, and says, "Look unto him and be saved all the ends of the earth." Read over the 8th chapter of the Proverbs, and you will find the very same doctrine delivered which I am offering to you.—We are often bid to sing unto the Lord, and to rejoice in the Lord; all which expressions plainly testify that there is true joy to be found in him. *He wipes the tears from off all faces, and will cause the rebuke of his people to cease †.* As many of you as have been at the minster may recollect it was observed, the way for any one to be happy was to believe in Christ, who said *Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me.* It was justly observed, men are apt to run away from their troubles, and drive into worldly business, and do not come to Jesus, who alone can give them true comfort and happiness. Our Saviour says, *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world †.*

Depend on it religion is so far from driving people mad, that it is the only thing which will ever bring them to their senses, and give them a peaceable and comfortable mind. When you dwell in Christ, and Christ in

† Isa. xxv. 8.

† John xvi. 33.

in you, then you feel a peace which passeth all understanding; by which the mind is kept in the knowledge and love of God: *For in his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore* †. As for all the happiness which arises from creature comforts, be they riches, pleasure, honour, beauty, or any thing else short of God, it will leave us behind in a very little time. The happiness which we want is that which will not fly from us when sickness or pain shall overtake us; when old age shall shake us by the hand; when death shall make his formidable approach; when the pillars of the house shall shake and tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and those that look out of the windows be darkened. We want a happiness which will stand the scrutiny of a judgment seat, and the terror of a flaming world: In a word, a happiness immortal as your soul, and immoveable as the throne of God.

6. The design of the Gospel is to turn men from danger to safety. We are informed that all having sinned, they are under the curse, and consequently in danger of dropping into Hell; and there is but one way of escaping, and that is by flying to Christ; for there is no other name given among men by which we can be saved from sin and misery here, or eternal damnation hereafter. The Gospel holds forth this Saviour, saying, *Be-*  
*bold*

bold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Suffer me to remind you of a few awful passages: The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the people that forget God †. Upon the wicked will God rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup\*. For Tophet is prepared of old, he hath made it large and deep; the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle the same ‡. For woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his own hands shall be given him §. Nay, such shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torments ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night ||. For their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.—The Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power \*\*. O consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver §§. My dear fellow sinners, these are doleful subjects, and what a preacher of the Gospel can take little pleasure in; but if we undertake to teach we must be faithful,

† Psalm ix. 17.

‡ Isa. iii. 11.

§§ Psalm l. 22.

\* Psalm xi. 6.

|| Rev. xiv. 11, 12.

† Isa. xxx. 31.

\*\* 2 Thes. i. 8, 9.



faithful, for *knowing the terrors of the Lord we must persuade men\**. As watchmen we must make a faithful report, so that you may be warned to fly from the wrath to come. We apprise you of your danger, that you may escape this condemnation, by flying to the only refuge, a crucified Saviour, in whom all fulness dwells, and then you are safe. Then let the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat; let the sun be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, yet, having fled to the appointed refuge, you are safe; then you may lift up your heads with unutterable joy, for the time of your compleat redemption is come.—Now, I pray, what is there amiss in all this? Is it not the truth as it is in Jesus? In this manner do we labour to *turn the world upside down*.

II. But it is time for me to hasten to the second thing proposed, which is to shew some reasons why we come hither.

1. It is the express command of our Lord and Master, who says, *Go out quickly into the lanes and streets of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind*.—Nay, he repeats the command, *Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled†*.

Now, I apprehend this passage must have

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\* 2 Cor. v. 11.

† Luke xiv. 21—23.

a meaning; and sure I am, if we seek for some mystical meaning, we shall be in great danger of making nonsense of it. Besides, we have its literal meaning confirmed by our Saviour himself, who went out into the highways and hedges, and preached the Gospel every where. He was far from being nice; for he who was to die for ruin'd Sinners knew too well the value of them to let them perish for want of speaking to them in the open air, and his own precious blood has consecrated the whole earth, and rendered every place proper to preach the Gospel in. But some will say, Are not places set apart for preaching in; and may not people resort thither and hear preaching? There are places, and people may resort thither; but is it not a melancholy truth that there are more that stay away than go to any place of worship? For the sake of these poor wanderers we come out into the lanes and streets, and if we do not, who will? I know no law against it, and I think we have a very good precedent for it in the very chapter from whence the Text is taken, ver 17. St. Paul reasoned daily in the market with such as he met; and, in ver. 22, he stood on Mars Hill, a very public place, and preached a sermon to them. If we look into the Proverbs we shall find in several places *Wisdom crying without; she utters her voice in the STREETS: She cried in the CHIEF PLACES OF CONCOURSE.*

Nay

Nay, *she stands on the top of high places of the paths. She crieth at the gates at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Un- to you, O men, I call, and my voice is unto the sons of men* \*. Now, if all this is not sufficient proof for preaching in the streets, I will promise to preach no more in them.

2. We come to call you to repentance. This is the leading doctrine of the Gospel, such as our Saviour preached, when he said, *Repent, and believe the Gospel* †; and such as his servants preached, when they said, *Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord* ‡. And as all have sinned, all must repent, and this you all acknowledge, not only in the daily confession, mentioned before, but in that well-known Collect, when you acknowledge that, “tho’ you be tied down and bound with the chain of your sins, that the pityfulness of his mercy may loose you.” But repentance is not a bare confession of sin, but there must be a forsaking of it, if ever you intend to find mercy. And, indeed, if there is not a forsaking of it, it is plain there is not much abhorrence of it; but the true penitent will leave his pleasing, his profitable, and his honourable sins.

3. Another reason why we come hither is

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to

\* Prov. i. 20, 21. viii. 2, 3, 4.

† Mark i. 15.

‡ Acts iii. 19.

to preach our dear Lord Jesus unto you. We declare he loved your never-dying souls, so as to clothe himself with our frail nature, and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, that with his stripes we might be healed. Look over at your leisure the 53<sup>d</sup> chapter of *Isaiab.* He, by the blood of his cross, hath expiated all our guilt, satisfying his father's justice, taking away the curses of the law which were against us, taking them out of the way and nailing them to his cross, and came and preached peace to all them who were afar off. Behold, then, the astonishing love of God our Saviour, who looked and there was none to save; therefore his own arm brought salvation to lost sinners; *for he came to seek and to save that which was lost.* He gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time, and by the grace of God tasted death for every man. He offered himself a full, "perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

4. We come hither to exhort you to believe in this all-sufficient Saviour. *For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so is the Son of Man lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.—For God so loved the world, that*



that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life\*. Thus we find believing brought in twice together in the very same words. So when he gave his Apostles their commission, it ran thus, Go ye into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned†. But the grand question now arises, What is believing? I wish men were intent upon knowing what it is, seeing salvation or damnation are suspended thereupon. This important affair does not consist in being join'd to any religious society, or receiving any set of religious tenets, much less on repeating of creeds.—How many thousands say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, &c.” who live in open rebellion against God; who are drunkards, swearers, liars, sabbath-breakers, and live in every other abomination? Now, you are a sad believer if you are one of this wretched stamp. Remember, it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and as soon as he thus believes, he is justified, and has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ‡. Besides this, believing is differently expressed in the sacred writings. In the Old Testament it is frequently called trusting in the Lord. *Trust in the Lord and do good§. Trust ye in*

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the

\* John iii. 14, 15, 16. † Mark xvi. 16. ‡ Rom. v. 1.  
§ Psalm xxxvii. 3.

*the Lord for ever* \*. *They that trust in the Lord are like mount Zion that cannot be moved, but standeth fast for ever* †. In the New Testament it is called believing in Christ, looking to him, following of him, eating his flesh and drinking his blood, and such are said to have eternal life abiding within them. As the Holy Ghost is so redundant in expressions, it shews the importance of the thing, so that some of these expressions may be the more easily understood.

5. We come hither to apprise both Saints and Sinners of Satan's devices. Poor thoughtless mortals are pleasing themselves with divers vanities, and are jesting upon the brink of eternal ruin, while the grand foe is laughing them to scorn all the time, and pleas'd, if any thing can please a lost Angel, at the sight of careless sinners rushing headlong to endless ruin. Now, we want to make you sensible of your danger, that you may escape it.—If some daring ruffian, in this city, was determin'd upon your life, either by force or fraud, by night or by day, would you not be continually upon your guard against so dangerous a foe? Such is that grand adversary of whom I am warning you; he goes up and down continually seeking whom he may devour. He is in one place call'd a God; and that shews his amazing power: Some times an old serpent; and that shews his

\* Isa. xxvi. 4.

† Psalm cxxv. 1.

his amazing cunning: Some times our adversary; and that shews we are to expect no quarter from him: A roaring lion\*; and that shews his great savageness. He that cast down a third part of the stars† will not spare poor worms; for he is come down having great wrath. As for real Saints, he spares them not, and that they know right well. They find a need to watch and pray, lest they fall into temptation.

6. We come hither to encourage all in well-doing, and, as far we can, to be helpers of their faith. We come to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees; to say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, yea with a recompence he will come and save you. If there is a good desire in you, it is the work of his spirit, and let that encourage you steadily to look up to him who is able and willing to perfect that which he hath begun in you. Many are your enemies, within and without, but fear not; for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.—He hath said, *In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*‡. We have reason to be thankful that we live in a land of peace and liberty, and that we can worship God as we please, and when and where we please: Nevertheless there is a spirit of enmity

\* 1 Pet. v. 8. † Rev. xii. 4. ‡ John xvi. 33.

enmity in every carnal, unrenewed heart, which will manifest itself in various forms (as was before observed); some times by reproaches, bitter words, scoffing or deriding, hearing and propagating evil reports, lies and slanders. Never think of having the favour of God and man too; if the world cares and speak well of you, there is great reason to fear you are not faithful to God. Look through the New Testament, and you will find *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution* \*. Let none of these things move you, for as your day is so will your strength be; and though it be through the fire or water, yet God will bring you at length into the wealthy place. One hour's enjoyment of the New Jerusalem will obliterate all the pain or toil which you may have suffered for your Redeemer's sake here below; for he will wipe all your tears away, and the remembrance of past sufferings shall be done away.

7. Lastly, We come hither to leave the incorrigible without any excuse; because whether they will hear or forbear, they shall know, at the great day, a way of salvation has been declared to them. That very Gospel which we preach, is sure to be the power of God either of salvation or damnation wherever it is declared: *Therefore take heed how ye hear. Beware lest that come upon you which*

\* 2 Tim. iii. 12.



which is spoken in the Prophets. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye will in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto you†. This is a very unpleasant thought to a generous mind, viz. to think of rising up as preaching witnesses against any at the last day. But could I flatter myself that my plain testimony should be useful to any one soul, I should think myself amply rewarded for my labour. I know it has a contemptible appearance for a man to set up himself as a gazing-stock in this public manner; but be it so; it is nothing like the shame which my Saviour underwent when he was spit upon and rudely buffeted; when he was cruelly scourged and painfully crowned with thorns; when he carried his cross through the streets of Jerusalem, and at last was nailed to the cursed tree.

See there his temples crown'd with thorns;

His bleeding hands extended wide;

His streaming feet transfix'd and torn;

The fountain gushing from his side.

O, can we stand upon our punctilios of honour, respect, or credit, when we see our incarnate God made a spectacle to devils, men, and angels? For my own part, I trust I should rejoice were I set in

\* Acts xiii. 40; 41.

in the Stocks all the Afternoon, could it save one soul.—But, alas! should I shed my blood it would signify nothing; no, 'tis the blood, the precious blood of Jesus which hath atoned, and which alone can purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Such is the Gospel, such is its powerful influence wherever it is received, thus to turn the world upside down. What think you now? What worse would this City be if all its inhabitants were thus turned?

The streets would then be full of praise,

Of Jesus' love, his gracious ways,

His mercy, and his name.

Then there would be no need of our coming forth in this public manner; no, all would be peace and harmony, and riot and discord would cease. But if the Gospel has this effect where it is received, have you received it? Have you got that religion which will stand the shock of that awful messenger which rides on his pale Horse? Have you that religion which will stand when the artillery of Heaven is discharged; when the magazines of fire and brimstone shall break forth and set the world on flames? Should this be the Hour, which of you could clap your glad wings and say, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly?* Well, that awful hour is swift on its approach; seek the Lord while he may be found

found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

To conclude, I am glad to see that decency of behaviour, and attention which the greatest part of you have shewn; it shews good sense and good manners, and let me hope it is a sign of an understanding and believing mind, so that you may receive the truth in the love thereof, and feel the Gospel to be the power of God unto an endless life.

F I N I S.

... call upon him who is the Lord of  
the world, and he will answer  
us, and he will be with us  
in the day of our need.

I am glad to see that you  
are with us, and that you  
are part of our family.  
I am glad to see that you  
are with us, and that you  
are part of our family.  
I am glad to see that you  
are with us, and that you  
are part of our family.

